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C O N F I D E N T I A L KUWAIT 004846

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/20/2015  
TAGS: [EAID](#) [AMER](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [ENRG](#) [KU](#) [KATRINA](#) [AID](#)  
SUBJECT: PARLIAMENT COMMITTEE PASSES KATRINA AID PACKAGE  
DESPITE RESERVATIONS OF SOME MPS

REF: KUWAIT 4281 (AND PREVIOUS)

Classified By: CDA Matthew Tueller for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) During its November 20 meeting, the National Assembly's Budget and Closing Accounts Committee approved the GOK's \$500 million hurricane Katrina aid package. Islamist MP Dr. Nasser Al-Sane, a member of the Budget and Closing Accounts Committee told Poloff November 21 that the National Assembly would most likely vote on, and approve, the aid package in its next regularly scheduled session on November 28. According to Al-Sane, the money would be disbursed as follows: \$100 million in cash donations to humanitarian organizations working on hurricane Katrina relief (Note: \$25 million of this \$100 million has already been disbursed (reftel).), \$100 million in fuel for OIF, and the remaining \$300 million in petroleum products given to "the United States"; he did not specify how or to whom these petroleum products would be given. (Note: We have received conflicting figures on the amounts earmarked for each of the three different means of disbursement (reftel).)

¶2. (C) Al-Sane, one of two MPs in the National Assembly associated with the Islamic Constitutional Movement, the political arm of the Muslim Brotherhood in Kuwait, said that although the committee approved the aid package, several MPs, including himself, had some reservations about the aid. First, MPs felt slighted by the Council of Minister's approval of the aid without adding the qualifying language, "upon approval by the National Assembly." Second, MPs questioned the relevance of the \$100 million in OIF fuel to hurricane Katrina relief operations. Al-Sane acknowledged that the public attention given to the aid package made it politically infeasible to make amendments, even reallocating the aid to more direct humanitarian purposes. He predicted the National Assembly would approve the aid package, though these objections may be aired publicly during debate preceding the vote.

¶3. (C) In a November 20 meeting with Poloff prior to the approval of the Katrina aid package, MP Jamal Al-Omar, the Rapporteur of the Budget and Closing Accounts Committee and an independent, pro-government legislator, expressed a different opinion, stating that given the close and friendly U.S.-Kuwaiti relationship the \$500 million aid package was "the least we could do." He predicted easy passage of the Katrina aid in both his committee and the National Assembly.

¶4. (C) Comment: Al-Sane's breakdown of the assistance package differs from the Foreign Minister's description (reftel). Al-Sane's figures confirm Embassy's original understanding of the allocations. While the total GOK assistance package is unlikely to change, the allocations could alter after the National Assembly votes on the package

at the November 28 session. End comment.

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